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ABSTRACT

Cincinnati (Ohio) has established a collaborative effort between the private sector, the Cincinnati Public Schools, and public elected officials for the purpose of reducing dropouts and reducing youth unemployment. Started in 1986, the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative (CYC) immediately began to study relevant data from the schools, defined at-risk students, and decided on new data collection needs. Next, they studied the indicators that often identified potential dropouts, the policies and procedures that were in effect regarding these students, and the existing resources that are available. A detailed list of intervention strategies and approaches is discussed, for example, a higher education information center, a jobs network, a dropout recovery program, a leadership development training for teachers and administrators, and tutoring. Funding sources and a list of expenditures were included. The goals of the collaborative were defined as establishing a director to manage the CYC and the initiation of community involvement and education activities. Appendices are available upon request. (LMS)

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PREVENTION OF DROPOUTS

THREE-YEAR PLAN

(Appendixes not included)

Prepared by

Cincinnati Youth Collaborative

Submitted to the Ford Foundation

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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EA 080 168

November 30, 1987

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PREVENTION OF DROPOUTS

THREE-YEAR PLAN

Prepared by

Cincinnati Youth Collaborative

Submitted to the Ford Foundation

November 30, 1987

PREFACE

This plan is the result of many months of deliberations by many organizations and individuals under the leadership of the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative. Our plans are still evolving. The present paper represents our deliberations to date. We will keep the Ford Foundation informed of changes made to this basic document from time to time.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ford Foundation for providing $25,000 as a planning grant which helped us in a substantial way in putting this plan together.

We would also like to appreciate the efforts of the members of the Collaborative and its various committees, as well as the members of the various organizations represented in the Collaborative membership. Without their selfless giving of time and resources, this work could not have made as much progress as it did.

Our thanks are also due to Dr. Zulfi Ahmad, Mr. Gordon Hullar, and other members of the planning committee for drafting the plan. Thanks are also due to Dr. Joseph Gastright for helping with the sections related to the data base and indicators of dropping out.

Signed:

John Pepper, President Procter & Gamble Collaborative Co-Chairperson	Lee Etta Powell, Superintendent Cincinnati Public Schools Collaborative Co-Chairperson	J. Kenneth Blackwell Vice-Mayor, City of Cincinnati Collaborative Co-Chairperson

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I. SUMMARY

CINCINNATI CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Cincinnati City School District has a population of 400,000. Like the city, the school district contains a mixture of several ethnic and racial groups. The population of blacks in the city is 37 percent, and the percent of black students in the school district is approximately 60.

The school district offers educational programs for children from pre-school level to grade 12. The total enrollment is 52,000.

The district offers a rich variety of educational programs. The school district has been running an exceptional program of alternative schools since 1974. Many of these alternative programs are nationally recognized.

For the past several years the school system has been making exceptional progress towards providing quality education in a racially integrated environment. The achievement scores of students at all grade levels have been rising for the past several years. The California achievement test results of spring 1987 showed that 53.5 percent of the students were at or above the national norms in reading. In mathematics 58.1 percent of all students scored at or above the national norms.

Following are additional facts and special features of the Cincinnati City School District.

Administration

Dr. Lee Etta Powell, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Lynn E. Goodwin, Deputy Superintendent for Business and Finance
Dr. Reginald Leon Green, Deputy Superintendent for Administration, Curriculum and Instruction

Staffing

The Cincinnati Public Schools district has nearly 6,000 employees and is one of the top ten employers in the city. About half of the district's employees are teachers, 2951 in 1986-87.

Enrollment

Kindergarten	4,680
Primary	14,070
Intermediate	10,930
Special Education	1,470
Middle/Junior High	5,450
Senior High	14,690
Special Schools	600
TOTAL	51,890

Pupil Transportation

The Cincinnati Public Schools district provides transportation for 36,154 public and 8,103 private school students daily to 301 schools in 731 vehicles over 1,603 routes. The routes exceed 55,000 miles traveled per day, over 10 million miles in a year.

Facilities

The district's building inventory consists of 132 buildings, located at 91 sites - 82 operational schools, four administrative and warehouse centers, two leased sites, and three vacant surplus buildings. The operational buildings encompass 8.7 million square feet, the equivalent of 108 Riverfront Coliseums.

The district has 59 elementary schools, 11 junior/middle schools, 9 senior high schools, and three special schools.

Food Services

In the 1986-87 school year, the district's Food Services Branch served 6.7 million meals, 37,700 per day.

Budget

The recently approved budget for the 1987-88 school year is $210 million.

Design for School Excellence

In the fall of 1985, the Cincinnati Public School district implemented the Design for School Excellence. This program is designed to publicly recognize schools for excellence, while at the same time, identify areas of weakness and stimulate improvement.

Ten indicators of excellence were identified, against which each school can be measured. Over 8,000 people in our community - including representatives from community groups, parents, and staff - suggested characteristics they believe stand for excellence in education.

Each school is measured against the following ten indicators: student achievement in reading, student achievement in mathematics, student attendance, writing mastery, staff attendance, interracial understanding, discipline, and parent attitude, student attitude, and teacher attitude toward school.

Bronson Settlement

On February 16, 1984, the Cincinnati Board of Education and the State of Ohio reached a tentative agreement with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to settle the Bronson litigation. That agreement was approved by the Court on June 22.

The settlement provides that the Board will, over a seven-year period, continue the significant progress made in reducing racial isolation. This continued progress is to be achieved through educationally sound programs which provide quality integrated education and will be financed by approximately $5 million each year in new state funds. The agreement established certain standards to be reached over the seven-year term, but leaves the authority to select the methods of meeting that responsibility with the school district.

Since the 1984 agreement, the Cincinnati Public School district has enlarged its array of quality integrated programs and is on target in meeting the goals set forward in the agreement. The Taeuber Index is the principal means of measuring goal achievement. It is a widely accepted standard for gauging the extent of racial isolation in schools and housing.

District-Wide Enrollment

The district's school population is increasing and will continue this increase through the 1990s. While in the past some costs were stabilized because of declining enrollment, now funds must be provided for the education of additional children. The 1987-88 school year will be the second year of increased enrollment.

Low Income Families

The percent of students from low income families increased from the previous year. With approximately six out of every ten students coming from low income families, the challenges faced by the Cincinnati Public Schools are great.

Prior to the 1981-82 school year, the percentage of students from low income families was calculated differently.

Student Attendance

Student attendance increased from 1985-86. While elementary attendance is still considerably higher than that at the secondary level, attendance at each level increased over the previous year. The improvement of student attendance is a major goal of the district and efforts will be maintained to continue the progress made the last five years.

Student Mobility

The percent of students tranferring to a school has remained relatively stable for the past five years with slightly more than one out of 10 children being newly enrolled in their school. When students change schools during the year, their education may suffer. A student loses valuable learning time adjusting to a new school, a new teacher, new peers, and perhaps new textbooks.

The district is addressing this concern with the adoption of a new transfer policy to be implemented during the 1987-88 school year.

Alternative School Enrollment

Over the past ten years alternative enrollment has continued to grow to over fifteen thousand students. These figures include those students moving among schools through the district's open enrollment program. The racial balance in alternative programs strives to approximate parity.

One of the reasons for the increase in alternative program enrollment is the opening of two new programs - The Paideia Critical Thinking School at Shroder and the Reading/Language Arts Demonstration Center at Roll Hill. In addition, North Avondale Montessori, Mt. Washington French Bilingual, Cheviot Spanish Bilingual, and The Academy of World Languages expanded their programs to include an additional grade level.

Where We Get Each Dollar

Local property taxes provide 43.3 cents of each dollar of revenue. State Aid and Grants provide 44.2 cents, the federal government provides 9.2 cents and other local sources provide 3.3 cents.

Tax Millage

With the passage of the November levy, Cincinnati homeowner's tax rates rank only fourth behind Cleveland, Dayton, and Columbus.

Where We Spend Each Dollar

Almost sixty cents (60.3) of our dollar goes to professional salaries and seventeen and one half cents (17.4) goes toward Civil Service salaries. This 77.7 cents total salary cost is our largest category of expenditures.

FINDINGS

The Collaborative engaged in extensive efforts for investigating the causes of dropouts. These efforts took four directions.

1. An analysis of the existing statistics in the Cincinnati Public Schools.
2. An interview study of 420 dropouts.
3. A comparison of the characteristics of dropouts and the students who, with similar basic characteristics, stay in and graduate.
4. Findings from informal investigations by the Collaborative.

The results of all these efforts are summarized below.

Findings from Statistical Analysis

Average Annual Attrition (Dropout) Rate: 6.6%

Average Annual Grades 7-12 Attrition: 40.0%

Range of Attrition Rate over 1980-86: 6.9%-7.9%

Approximate Number of Dropouts: 1,400-1,755 students

Attrition Rate Distribution by Grade:
(Two year average)

Grade:	7	8	9	10	11	12	Sp. Ed.	Total
Percent Dropouts:	2.6	6.0	23.7	22.7	18.5	21.0	5.9	100.4

Attrition Rates by Race:
(Approximate 2 year average)

	White	Black
Attrition	43%	57%
Enrollment	40%	60%

Attrition Rate by Gender:

Male	Female
55%	45%

Achievement and Attrition Rates:

Achievement:		Below Average	Average	Above Average
Attrition Rates:	Cincinnati	30%	62%	8%
	National	23%	54%	23%

Attendance and Attrition Rates:
(English Class)

	Dropouts		
	Best Attending	Median Attending	Worst Attending
	Absent	Absent	Absent
	20 days	40 days	70 days
Percent of dropouts:	20%	50%	20%

Failure and Attrition Rates:

Dropout Rates of Students			
On Age	Failed Once	Failed Twice	Failed Three or More Times
10%	60%	80%	99.9%

Findings from Interviews from Dropouts

Early in 1987, 420 dropouts of the previous years were interviewed to find out their reasons for dropping out. The following is the list of causes of dropping out and the percentage of dropouts indicating the respective causes.

Pregnancy/Child Care/Marriage	25%
Failure/Over-age/Low Grades	20%
Work (all mentions)	20%
Dislike for School	17%
Attendance	11%
Delinquency (out-of-school)	6%
Family Problems	6%
Suspension/Expulsion	4%
Illness/Health	4%
Drugs/Alcohol	3%
Other Students	3%

On the average, the dropouts gave 1.5 reasons from this list. There are multiple reasons for dropping out, and they occur in all combinations. The reasons at the bottom of the list are not less important - only less frequent.

About 20%-25% of the dropouts were doing reasonably well in school (passing, attending regularly) when they dropped out.

Findings from Comparison of Dropouts and Stay-ins

In an effort to identify factors that distinguish dropouts from those students who have similar basic characteristics, interviews were conducted using identical questions with a group of 200 students who were due for graduation last year (stay-ins). The following findings emerged from the comparisons of dropouts and stay-ins.

Composition of Families: No difference in the composition of the families. Only 30% or so of both groups live with their mother and father.

Mother's Education: The stay-ins were much less likely to have parents with only an eighth grade education.

Father's Education: The stay-ins were twice as likely to have parents who attended school for 12 years. Over half of the dropouts had parents who were dropouts.

Family Size: Dropouts tended to come from larger families. Fifty percent more children.

Dropout in the Family: Dropouts were more than twice as likely to have another dropout in the family.

School Failure: The in-school group was selected to be one or more years behind. Dropouts were more likely to have failed twice (16% vs 5%). Dropouts were much more likely to have failed in high school (47% vs 14%) and in middle school (31% vs 16%). Most stay-ins failed in the elementary grades (70%).

Discipline Record: A higher percentage of dropouts had been suspended (66% vs 49%) and for more times (3 vs 1). A higher percentage of dropouts had been expelled. (11% vs 4%).

Achievement: The in-school group was selected to be in stanines 1-4. Only 30% of the dropouts were in the below average range, compared to 58% of the stay-ins. Cincinnati dropouts have higher achievement scores than those reported nationally (34th percentile vs 27th percentile).

Final Grade in English: During their last full year in school, dropouts failed English at a much higher rate than the stay-ins.

Absence in English Class: The in-school groups matched the system average attendance in senior high school ($\lesssim$ 90%). The dropouts were absent one third of the time.

School Problems: Since the in-school group rated most other problems as more important than the dropouts, the sense of being persecuted by a teacher/administrator is an important feature in dropping out for some students.

Family Problems: The in-school group reported more problems on all family items.

Problems with Work: The stay-ins were not asked whether they had a job (oversight). Their responses suggest that fewer of them were working. This may be one of the reasons why they stayed in school.

Court-Related Problems: The dropouts reported more problems on all of the court-related causes. Serious delinquency problems appear to be a major cause of dropping out.

Social Causes: On all of the social causes, more dropouts reported important problems. It appears that a major distinction between dropouts and students who stay in is that the latter manages to avoid delinquency, pregnancy, and problems with drugs and alcohol.

Findings from Informal Investigations: The Collaborative, in the course of the year, met with many individuals, organizations and community groups to find out the reasons for the high attrition rate in the high school level, and low participation of minorities in college and participation of youth in the job market. These led to the following findings.

1. There is a need for financial incentives to the students at risk to encourage them to complete their education. It was determined that financial incentives for college and some assurance of jobs would motivate the students to complete their high school education.

2. There was a need for systematic information regarding opportunities for financial support, such as scholarships and different kinds of programs available in area colleges and universities.

3. There was a need for greater coordination and information regarding availability of jobs for high school graduates.

4. There was a need for early preventative measures in the form of giving an early start in the school to children from high risk segments of the community.

5. There was a strong need for coordinating the efforts of different governmental social service organizations in providing services to high risk children and youth.

PLAN OF ACTION

The review of findings related to the dropout problem in Cincinnati has led the Collaborative to the plan of action summarized below.

1. Establishment of a Directorate. The Collaborative is hiring a full-time executive director, effective January 1, 1988, for coordinating the various activities of the directorate.

   Launching a Communications Program. An extensive communications plan will be launched effective January 1, with the involvement of local media, aimed at public awareness of the dropout problem and securing community support for solutions.

3. Development of an Interventions Plan. A plan of interventions has been developed as listed below. Detailed descriptions of these interventions are given in Chapter VII of this report.

   a. Pre-School Demonstration Projects in Taft and McKinley Elementary Schools.
   b. Taft High School District Pilot Project, including counseling, monitoring, tutoring, staff development, instructional re-structuring, and community resource coordination
   c. Bridges to Jobs Component, including creation of jobs, a job network, and a dropout recovery program.
   d. Bridges to Colleges Component, including establishment of an information clearance center for higher education and providing financial incentives for college education.
   e. Leadership Training Component, aimed at inservice training of educational leaders from administrative and teacher ranks.
   f. Instructional Improvement Component, aimed at improving the academic performance of students.

4. Financing strategies for the Collaborative's projects include the following:

   a. Raising new funds from corporations and foundations.
   b. Inkind contributions from corporations and other public and non-public organizations.
   c. Reordering of priorities by the school district and other agencies to meet the needs of students at risk.
   d. Refocusing of social services.
   e. Creation of an endowment fund.

II. INTRODUCTION

CINCINNATI YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

The Idea of the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative began in the summer of 1986 with informal discussions between members of the Cincinnati Public School System, the Private Industry Council, the Cincinnati Foundation and business leaders. The Ford Foundation Planning Grant was one of the driving forces for these discussions. All participants were interested in reducing dropouts and in reducing youth unemployment. A collaborative effort between the private sector, the Cincinnati Public Schools and public elected officials was visualized as a way to meet the needs of all participants.

Organization

In January of 1987, the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative (CYC) was formally created with John Pepper, President of Procter & Gamble, Dr. Lee Etta Powell, Superintendent of Cincinnati Public Schools and J. Kenneth Blackwell, Vice-Mayor of Cincinnati as co-leaders. The CYC organization structure includes a Steering Committee and sub-committees led by Steering Committee members. An Executive Director is scheduled to join the leadership team on January 1, 1988. Dr. Powell, Mr. Pepper and Mr. Blackwell co-lead the Steering Committee and function as the Executive Committee. Steering Committee members are selected based on their personal interest, skill and ability to represent sectors of the community. The present Collaborative Steering Committee membership includes:

Mr. Scott Aiken, Vice President
The Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company

Mr. J. Kenneth Blackwell, Vice-Mayor
The City of Cincinnati

Mr. Herb Brown, Vice President
Western-Southern Life Insurance Company
Private Industry Council
Member, Cincinnati Board of Education

Mr. William Burleigh, Vice President
Scripps-Howard

Mr. Luther Church, Executive Director
The Citizens Committee on Youth

Mr. Tom Collins, Public Affairs
The Procter & Gamble Company

Mr. Dewey Fuller, Executive Director
Greater Cincinnati Urban League

Dr. Reginald Green, Deputy Superintendent
Cincinnati Public Schools

Ms. Christine Heekin, Past President
Community Chest

Mr. Charles Hinckley, President
Union Central Life Insurance Company

Dr. Willis Holloway
Cincinnati Public Schools

Rev. Duane Holm, Executive Director
Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition

Mr. Gordon Hullar
The Procter & Gamble Company

Dr. Jerome Jenkins, Executive Director
Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses

Ms. Jane Juracek, Manager, Public Relations
The General Electric Company

Mr. Jerry Lawson, President
The Board of Education, Cincinnati Public Schools

Mr. Ralph Lee
Union Central Life Insurance Company

Mr. Ted Mauser, Vice President
Cincinnati Milacron

Mr. John Miller, Chairman & CEO
Lazarus

Mr. Thomas Mooney, President
Cincinnati Federation of Teachers

Mr. Richard Nicolosi, Vice President
The Procter & Gamble Company

Mr. John Pepper, President
The Procter & Gamble Company

Mr. Joseph Pichler, President
The Kroger Company

Dr. Lee Etta Powell, Superintendent
Cincinnati Public Schools

Ms. Gail Prather
The Procter & Gamble Company

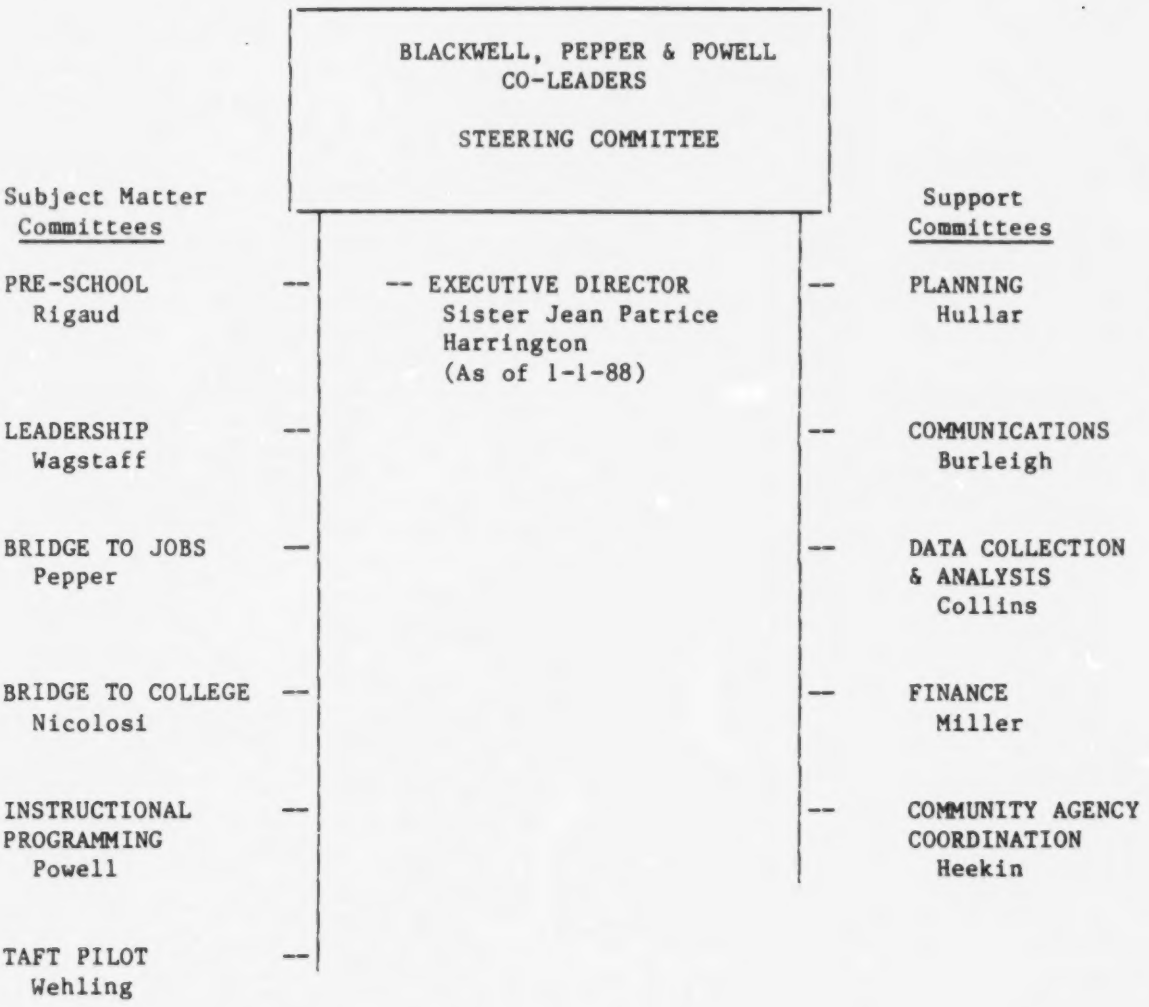
Mr. Edwin Rigaud
The Procter & Gamble Company

Ms. Maureen Sullivan, Director
Urban Appalachian Council

Dr. Lonnie Wagstaff, Dean, College of Education
University of Cincinnati

An additional 100+ community leaders are actively involved on the eleven subcommittees.

CINCINNATI YOUTH COLLABORATIVE



III. DATA BASE

A. Current Status of School District's Data Base

Beginning with the 1980-81 school year, all students enrolled in school within the district boundaries (public, private and parochial) have been maintained on the student data base. Each student on the data base is assigned a unique seven-digit student number which is used to identify students for later data entry despite name changes, uses of nicknames, and incorrect birthdates. The data base entries on individual students contain the usual directory (demographic) information (name, birthdate, race, sex, current address, etc.), as well as a longitudinal transfer and withdrawal history. A variety of additional information is maintained on the data base on an annual basis but is discarded at the beginning of a new school year (report card data, pass/fail data, achievement test scores, criterion-referenced test levels, and program codes). Some of this data has been archived on tape (achievement test scores, 1981-87), secondary report card data (1985-87) and can be assembled on student files.

School membership in the Cincinnati Public Schools is considered to be continuous, or ongoing. Once enrolled in the system, students remain accountable to the system until they withdraw to another educational institution which grants a regular high school diploma. A series of withdrawal codes have been established which are consistent with the dropout definition established by the State of Ohio:

> "Dropouts are pupils who were enrolled in a school district but did not return to school at the beginning of the school year or did not complete the school year in question because of withdrawal to other than an educational program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards. Dropouts would include pupils withdrawn for the following reasons: work permit; over 18 years of age; armed services; runaway; cannot be located by school district; marriage or pregnancy and not enrolled in instruction for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; institutional placement without a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; adult education without verified enrollment; and expulsion if not required to re-enroll because of being at least 18 years of age. Specifically excluded from the dropout enumeration are pupils withdrawn for the following reasons: death; illness; approved home instruction; transfer to another school district or educational program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; institutional placement with a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; and adult education where enrollment is verified."

Withdrawal codes are also available for categories of students not defined as dropouts under the state definition (transfer to another school system, death, illness, home instruction, institutional placement, and adult education). Students withdrawn in these categories are removed from school system accountability and are not included in dropout counts. Annual dropout counts (July 1-June 30) are reported to the State as part of the Superintendent's Annual Report. The State computes dropouts rates using average daily membership in grades 7-12 as the denominator.

In summary, the system data base provides for longitudinal monitoring of student membership and for the identification of dropouts consistent with the definition provided by the State. The data base contains no provision for the capture of important educational information as part of the longitudinal record.

In May, 1985, the Cincinnati Board of Education mandated the identification of students at risk and the development of a management plan to improve the delivery of educational service to those students. The action motion defined students at risk as: ...."Those who have not been promoted as well as those whose academic progress is so low that they are most likely to fail or drop out of school."

In April, 1986, the Board of Education approved the expansion of the data base to include a longitudinal record of educational progress and the capture of additional data to allow for early identification of students at risk. A description of these changes is included in Sub-Section D of this section.

District's Definition of At-Risk Students: Additional research on the causes of failure and of dropping out was mandated by the Board in 1985. In 1986, the system adopted a working definition for the identification of students at risk based on existing information. Individual schools were required to create lists of students at risk based on four types of information. Students were defined as at risk if they had achievement scores below the 41st NCE (national 33rd percentile); if they were one or more years overage; if they were reported as currently in danger of failing on a structured teacher report; or had risk factors external to school (return from court placement, pregnant, abused, etc.). The definition was regarded as tentative and additional risk factors were to be identified and included in the expanded data base (Sub-Section D).

B. Extent of Dropout Rates

Student withdrawals are reported by individual schools to the Student Census Office in those cases where the student and parent notify the school in advance. The Census Office enters the appropriate code into the student data base. In cases where the students simply quit attending school, and are over 18 years of age, the school reports a withdrawal code of Overage and the

student is entered on the data base as a dropout. Students under 18, who quit attending school, as well as students who do not return to school (no shows), are referred to visiting teachers for investigation. The visiting teachers attempt to contact these students and convince them to return to school. When they are unsuccessful, they apply one of the State dropout codes and refer the withdrawal to Census for processing. Students who cannot be located are listed as Unverified (one of the dropout categories).

Dropout counts for a given year (July 1-June 30) are determined from the data base and are used as the numerator in the calculation of an annual cross-sectional dropout rate. Two dropout rates are currently calculated using different denominators. One dropout rate uses ADM (Average Daily Membership) in grades 7 to 12, recovered from teacher roll books, as part of the computation of daily attendance. The second dropout rate, used to determine dropout rates by gender and race, uses average membership during the first full week in October as the denominator. Over five years the October-based dropout rate has been systematically lower than the ADM-based rate by a small amount (0.2% to 0.3%). A description of the calculation of dropout rates as well as a five-year analysis of system dropout counts is appended to this report (see appendixes).

Plans have been established to calculate a cohort, or longitudinal dropout rate (Morrow, 1986) as part of the data base improvements described in Sub-Section D.

On the average, 1755 students have dropped out in each of the past five years (see Table 1). Year-to-year changes in the dropout count have been relatively small. The largest number of dropouts occur in grade nine, closely followed by grade ten.

Table 1. Dropouts by Grade, 1982-83 Through 1986-87.

Grade	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	5-Year Average
7	109	66	50	69	57	70
8	114	64	108	93	83	92
9	466	330	427	453	459	427
10	438	403	408	402	421	414
11	354	293	331	312	357	329
12	228	425	379	367	308	341
UN	104	128	101	37	36	82
Total	1813	1709	1804	1733	1721	1755

The overall dropout rate over the five-year period has averaged 7.8 percent based on October membership (see Table 2). The change in dropout rates has been small (7.4%-7.9%), and there is no evidence that the rate is increasing. Grade-to-grade dropout rates show greater variability. The average dropout rates have been highest at grades ten and twelve. The dropout rate at grade nine is underestimated, because the membership at grade nine is inflated due to very high failure rates at this grade (26% to 34%).

Table 2. Dropout Rates by Grade, 1982-83 Through 1986-87.

Grade	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	5-Year Average
7	2.4	1.5	1.2	1.7	1.5	1.7
8	2.6	1.5	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3
9	10.4	7.6	8.9	9.3	10.3	9.3
10	12.2	10.5	10.8	10.9	11.1	11.1
11	10.6	9.0	10.5	10.0	10.8	10.2
12	9.1	14.8	13.4	14.0	11.6	12.7
Total	7.9	7.4	7.9	7.8	7.9	7.8

A tentative cohort dropout rate has been computed using the existing student data base. Some assumptions were necessary in order to correct for problems described in Section C. It appears that about 40 percent of the entering seventh graders, who remain on system accountability, drop out before graduation. Locally, male students have consistently dropped out at a higher rate than female students. In contrast to many published reports, white students have dropped out at a higher rate than black students.

C. Quality of Current Data Collection and Analysis

An extensive literature review on the issue of dropout definition was carried out over the past three years. In general, dropout definitions tend to be based on State legislation or regulation. A survey by the Council of Great City Schools (1986) showed extensive variation in dropout definition from state to state and in some cases, within state. Barber (1984) attempted to develop consensus on a definition but found that local and state-mandated concerns were held to be more important than a consistent national definition. The Department of Education and the Educational Commission of the States are pursuing efforts to establish a common dropout definition as a basis for national interpretation of dropout rates.

Some consensus has been developed for a variation on the definition provided by the U.S. Department of Education:

> "A dropout will be defined as any person who leaves school prior to graduation or completion of a formal high school education or legal equivalent, who does not within 45 school days enter another public or private educational institution or school program."

This definition was adopted by the Directors of Research and Evaluation of the Council of Great City Schools and is probably as close to the current state of the art as any.

Local dropout data collection will be modified to allow a system of double bookkeeping which will allow State reports to be maintained using the existing process, while data collection will be improved to identify and count dropouts using the more inclusive definition. The following major problems have been identified with the current dropout identification procedures:

1. The enrollment of students withdrawing to another school system is not presently verified. A new procedure has been approved which will cross-check withdrawals to other systems against requests for student records. Students will be reclassified as dropouts unless a request for student records is confirmed within 45 days. Dropouts in all categories will be reclassified as withdrawals upon receipt of a request for records, or other verification of enrollment in a diploma-granting institution.

2. Currently, students who withdraw and enroll in night school or adult basic education are removed from system accountability and not counted as dropouts (N≈ 200-300). No records are maintained on the data base to confirm continued progress toward a diploma. A new procedure has been approved which will maintain these students on the data base. Withdrawals before attainment of a diploma will be considered dropouts.

Currently, students who drop out in successive years are included in the annual cross-sectional rates. Annual dropout counts are inflated by from 200 to 300 students due to multiple dropouts. Pilot studies of cohort dropout rates suggest that the current 40% $\pm$ 3% non-completion rate is fairly accurate, because the data collection problems tend to cancel out in practice.

The focus of the data base and data collection changes currently being implemented is on the identification of individual students who remain on school system accountability but who do not receive a diploma. Accurate and consistent identification of dropouts is crucial to the early empirical identification of students at risk of dropping out. Accurate identification is also important for the evaluation of interventions designed to impact the dropout problem.

The changes currently being implemented will require a shift in the focus of dropout identification from the current annual cross-sectional identification to a more sophisticated longitudinal model. Cross-sectional, short-term dropout counts will be necessary for some purposes. The longitudinal, cohort-based analyses should be more sensitive to dropout intervention effects.

D. Needed Changes in the District's Current Data Base

The changes needed to permit precise monitoring of the dropout problem were addressed in the previous section. The remaining data base changes are designed to collect and maintain data which will improve the early identification of students at risk. A plan for improvement of the system's data base was developed and submitted to the School Board for approval. In June, 1986, the Board committed approximately $200,000.00 with a larger range commitment of $800,000.00 to the improvement of the student data base. Completion of the data base changes are scheduled for January, 1990. Specific projects designed to better identify at-risk students will be activated as they are completed.

The major change in the data base involves the retention of important educational information on the data base for each student from kindergarten to age 22. The on-line student history and academic history systems will remove important educational progress data from the existing paper files (cumulative folders) and make it immediately available for school unit and system-level analysis. Collection and maintenance of the student history data will require additional work at the school level. Wherever possible, the new data analysis system will be developed to provide better service to individual schools, and not simply require schools to supply data. The student history files will supply immediate access to the records of students who transfer from one school to another and provide a backup source of data if cumulative folders are lost.

A critical missing element in the existing data base is the absence of elementary report card information (grades, attendance). Research suggests that students at risk can and should be identified during the intermediate grades where interventions can be put in place to reduce the system's very high failure rates in grades 7 through 9. The local dropout study, discussed in Section IV, confirms the finding that teacher-assigned grades are a better predictor of dropping out than standardized achievement test scores. Computerized elementary mark reporting is one system included in the data base changes.

The educational information in the new data base will include: standardized achievement test scores, year(s) repeated, grade repeated, number of school changes, class grades, grade point average, credits (secondary), and teacher-reported risk factors. A separate system will collect and update socio-economic data on each family. Experience with collection of this data in the dropout study forced a reconsideration of the type of data that will be collected. Parent income and occupation proved difficult to obtain and difficult to code. The current plan would collect data on family composition, family size, parent education, and eligibility for free or reduced price lunch. Currently, discipline data (suspensions/expulsions) are maintained on paper files in each school. In the new data base, the discipline records would be added to each student's file in a protected section with limited access.

The data base will code student participation in certain school programs which plausibly effect the designation of students as "at risk". Programs specifically designed to reduce dropouts will be included in the educational experience record. Data analysis in the new system will include the capability of conducting discriminant analysis to identify the best predictors of failure and dropping out. The results of the dropout study show that predictors of dropping out are different when the data are disaggregated by gender and race. This suggests that separate at-risk indicators for subgroups of students will provide more accurate identification of an at-risk population.

In summary, the new student data base will provide a broad range of background, school performance, and behavioral variables for use in identifying students likely to fail and students likely to drop out.

E. Data Needs from Out-of-School Sources

A steering committee composed of representatives of thirty social service agencies was established for the high risk student project. The groups covered a broad range of interests and commitments (Community Chest, drug programs, employment programs, job training programs, The Boy Scouts of America, The Urban League, Urban Appalachian Council, Cincinnati Job Corps, mental health programs, family services, Juvenile Court).

The steering committee participated in the design of the dropout interview schedule and provided valuable contributions which expanded the range of the survey content. It also helped prepare a survey of social service agencies designed to ascertain services presently available to dropouts and the extent to which existing services meet existing needs. Most of these agencies reported that dropouts account for a disproportionate percentage of their clients and that the need for services is greater than can be met at their current funding levels.

The Urban Appalachian Council had conducted independent dropout studies based on 1980 census data which they shared with the steering committee.

The agencies with high proportions of dropouts in their client population and the agencies which directly assist dropouts in furthering their education and in improving their employability can provide valuable information on the number of dropouts who successfully find alternative educational routes leading to worthwhile employment (GED, job training, etc.). They also can detect changes in the makeup of their service population and provide feedback to the schools on changing problems faced by dropouts.

Representation from the police department and from juvenile court should be added to the steering committee. Out-of-school delinquency problems are a potent indicator of dropping out. Better coordination of information on students who get in trouble with the law and better transition from institutions back to school could impact the dropout rate.

The steering committee will be invited to continue in the role of an advisory group to the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative. Representatives from the steering committee are currently members of the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative.

Individual agencies will be encouraged to keep separate records on the number of Cincinnati Public Schools dropouts which they serve, as well as the number who successfully complete alternate credentialling programs.

IV. INDICATORS

A. Local Indicators

The system has collected an abundance of local data on the causes of dropping out and on the characteristics which distinguish dropouts from graduates, as part of its commitment to the Ford Foundation Urban Schools Program. Knowing that dropouts differ on a range of characteristics does not necessarily mean that the differences will be useful in identifying students at risk. Many of the differences are correlated and do not provide independent information to improve identification. Evidence from a discriminant analysis of the dropout study data suggests that some individual characteristics are better predictors for specific race-by-gender subgroups than they are for others. The at-risk identification system will take advantage of these group differences by weighing the individual variables to produce the most accurate empirical identification.

Empirical identification of students at risk has the advantage of providing a common definition across individual schools. This will allow identification of schools and programs which are already more or less effective in keeping at-risk students in school. There is great reluctance to identify students at risk and provide the lists to schools. The best prediction model will label many students as "at risk" who are currently doing well in school. Instead of labeling students, the at-risk identification system will provide support for local identification of students based on their current school performance. The system could provide early identification support by targeting elementary grade students for additional assistance based on their probability of failing at higher grades.

Many of the best indicators of dropping out are not useful for early identification of students at risk. A record of retention, failing grades, and poor attendance are good predictors that a secondary student will not graduate. Three quarters of all dropouts fit this pattern. Unfortunately interventions are particularly difficult for these students. Many believe that these factors are not so much causes of dropping out as symptoms that occur when students get in trouble because of some more fundamental problem. Certainly they retain value for identifying students likely to drop out in the immediate future.

School grades show greater potential as an early dropout predictor. Grades decline in the transition from elementary school to middle school, and later from middle school to high school. Students with marginal grades (largely D's) are at risk at higher grades. Some students with above average grades show abrupt declines to failure. A number of these students end up failing the year and even dropping out. Immediate identification of these crisis students with provision for counseling and support could keep up to 15% of all dropouts in school.

Consistent patterns of suspensions, expulsions, or perhaps more importantly, of out-of-school arrests and legal problems are important indicators that distinguish dropouts from low-achieving students who stay in school. Serious delinquency and in-school discipline problems are an important risk factor. A closer working relationship with the police and juvenile court would allow special support for these students.

Pregnancy and later lack of child care are important risk factors for up to 50% of all female dropouts. Only 20% or so of these students give pregnancy as the cause when they leave school. Some provision for pregnancy prevention, as well as a provision for in-school child care, could allow many of these students to work toward a diploma.

Working while in school appears to be an important risk factor for some 15 to 20% of all students. Large numbers of dropouts are working virtually full time while trying to keep up with school work. (See Section IV, E.) Schools will have to keep track of students' work experience in the identification of students at risk.

Dislike for school, alienation, and a sense of getting no where are mentioned by a significant number of dropouts ($\backsim$ 20%) as their most important reason for dropping out. It is unclear how such information could be routinely collected in any dropout prevention system. Teacher and staff sensitivity to the problem and school-based identification are likely the most effective solutions.

Finally, a number of low incidence but evidently potent indicators of dropping out will also need to be taken into account in the identification and treatment of high-risk students. Family problems, medical and physical health problems, drug and alcohol involvement, and racial problems are important reasons identified by from 3 to 6% of all students. Factor analysis indicates that these problems are discrete ones that do not cluster with more common dropout causes. Provision for identification of these sensitive personal causes will be difficult.

Evidence from the dropout study shows that family composition and parent education data still discriminates dropouts after achievement and school failure are partialed out. Collection of these data will improve the early identification of students-at-risk.

B. Effectiveness of the Current System for Identifying Indicators

The present system is not effective in collecting data on a majority of the indicators determined as important in the dropout study. Effective use of much of the information occurs within local schools if it occurs at all. Where data are collected, there is no provision for gathering it together for the identification and use with potential dropouts, except of course for the

cumulative folder. The data base changes will greatly improve the central recovery and maintenance of student-level data on important indicators. The central collection of student data cannot replace efforts at the school level. The identification of information on sensitive personal problems can only be accomplished by caring school personnel at the local level.

C. Research on Local Causes of Dropouts

Descriptive data on the dropouts were obtained from two sources. First, school records in the student data base allowed comparison of dropouts with graduates on a variety of demographic and educational variables. These data allowed the disaggregation of dropout rates by race, gender, age, grade, and number of grades repeated. The data base also provided comparisons of local dropouts with other dropouts nationally and in other cities reported in the literature on achievement test scores, school grades, and attendance rates. The second set of data reported in the present study was obtained from interviews of dropouts conducted by visiting teachers.

The interview schedule was based on a literature review of demographic and self-reported causes of dropping out (Bachman, Green, and Wirtanen, 1971; Center for Human Resource Research, 1980; Cervantes, 1965; National Education Association, 1965; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack and Rock, 1986; Greene, 1965; Wehlage and Rutter, 1986). The variables from High School and Beyond as reported by Ekstrom, et al (1986), were given special attention since they would provide comparison data from a national sample. The final interview schedule was prepared by a committee of school personnel, representatives of social service agencies, and community representatives. The broad community representation influenced the content of the interview schedule and led to the inclusion of a number of items not found in the reviewed literature.

The interview schedule included sections on demographic variables, school experiences, reasons for dropping out, the influence of significant others, and the dropouts' post-school experience. The demographic section included questions about family size, family structure, parents' education/occupation/income, dropouts among siblings, and birthplace (to ascertain Appalachian origin). The school experience section queried the student's record of suspensions, expulsions, out-of-school delinquency, as well as extracurricular activities, transportation time, and attitude toward school--both positive and negative. The reasons for dropping out were first developed using an open-ended, unprompted section. Interviewers were trained to ask probing questions but not to suggest any reasons. The dropouts were then queried on 42 specific reasons for dropping out in six categories: school related, family related, work/economic related, medical/emotional, social, and court related. The final sections gathered data on significant others who influenced the decision to drop out, and on the dropouts' experience since leaving school.

The descriptive results are presented and discussed in relation to results from High School and Beyond and selected state and urban school system reports (Barr and Knowles, 1986; California State Department of Education, 1986; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, and Rock, 1986; Hess, 1987; Poulos, 1986).

One problem with the simple use of dropout characteristics as indicators for identifying dropouts is the widely recorded problem of overprediction. A recent study (Wehlage and Rutter, 1986) reported high success in discriminating between college-bound and other high school students. The same study reports lower accuracy in discriminating dropouts from the other non-college-bound students. An additional study was implemented to get responses from a group of students who would be identified as at risk but who graduated in June.

A revised version of the dropout interview form was administered by counselors to 180 seniors who were in the lower four stanines, overage by one year or more, and yet who graduated in June, 1987. This in-school group has the two characteristics proposed for local identification of potential dropouts, and yet all of them graduated. Differences between the in-school group and the dropouts on the remainder of the survey characteristics are likely to be factors which are potent influences on dropping out.

The total in-school group (N=308) made up almost one out of every six graduates in 1986-87. Blacks were overrepresented in the in-school group (72%) as were males (58%). Black males, alone, made up 42% of the group.

E. Findings of Local Research

The interview data confirmed the accuracy, if not the completeness, of the dropouts identified in the school system data base. Only 1.5 percent of the dropouts contacted indicated that they had received a regular diploma from another school system. Since leaving school, only 5 percent of the dropouts had taken the GED test and 51 percent of those taking the test indicated that they had passed it.

The descriptive data on the entire dropout population (N=5,200) showed high agreement with the interview sample. Sixty-two percent of the interview sample and 60 percent of the dropout population scored in the average stanines in reading achievement. Eight percent in both samples scored in the above average stanines. Absence records were virtually identical in the two groups. Results from the total dropout population showed that males dropped out at a higher rate than females (55 percent to 45 percent) and that the dropout rate for white students was slightly higher than that of black students.

The important findings will now be summarized. Complete results of the survey are appended to this report.

Time of Dropping Out: Fifty-five percent of the system's dropouts over the past two years left school before completing the tenth grade, a figure higher than the 33 percent rate reported in one recent national study (Sum, 1986). Dropout prevention programs which start in senior high school will be too late to help many dropouts. Leaving school at an early grade does not necessarily mean that dropouts are missing years in school. The average graduate was 18.6 years old in June of their senior year. The average dropout was slightly over 18.0 years old when he/she left school. One quarter of the dropouts left school on or before reaching the age of 16. The early dropout group is disproportionately white in Cincinnati. Another group of dropouts persists for 13, 14, and even 15 years in school (20.9%) without receiving a diploma. The very late dropout group in Cincinnati is disproportionately black.

Almost half of all dropouts do so across the summer between school years (no shows). Students who drop out during the school year tend to be younger, have worse discipline records, and be overly white. Dropout numbers tend to be higher across the school year in those months immediately following the quarter grade reports. This suggests that the decision to drop out is still influenced by success or lack of it in current course work.

Effect of Failure and Overagedness: Viewed as a problem in itself or as a symptom of other underlying problems, a record of repeating one or more grades dramatically decreases the chance that a student will graduate. Locally, 80 percent of all dropouts had repeated a grade and 16 percent had repeated twice or three times. The probability of graduation decreased rapidly with retention. Ninety percent of all ninth graders who had never failed were found to graduate four years later. In contrast, the graduation rate for students one year overage was 40 percent, and for students two years overage, the graduation rate was less than 20 percent. Only a handful of graduates each year (0.1%) were three years overage for grade.

Comparisons with the stay-in group, all of whom graduated, and all of whom were at least one year overage, shows an important difference that suggests all retentions are not equally risky. Stay-ins were much less likely to have failed twice (5% vs 16%) but more importantly, 70 percent of the stay-ins had been retained at an elementary grade, while 78 percent of the dropouts had been retained solely at a secondary grade.

Academic Performance: Local dropouts scored lower on standardized tests than other students, but the difference was not as striking as in some national reports. The average dropout scored at the 41st normal curve equivalent (NCE) in reading and the 39th NCE in mathematics. In reading, 30 percent of the dropouts scored in the lower three stanines (below average), 62 percent in the middle three stanines (average), and 8 percent in the upper three stanines (above average). The scores were somewhat lower in mathematics (35%, 60%, 5%).

The stay-in group (N=308) shows that low test scores do not prevent graduation. Fifty-eight percent of the stay-ins scored in the lower three stanines and 42 percent scored in the fourth stanine. Despite low achievement scores, the stay-ins obtained average grades and graduated. In contrast, a third of the dropouts scored above the national median.

The difference between the two groups was far more striking in course grades. In the year before they dropped out, used because grade records were not available for school-year dropouts, 74 percent of the dropouts failed the required English course. Eleven percent of the stay-ins failed. Dropouts were absent 59 days in English courses. The stay-ins were absent 18 days, about average for the system. Course grades appear to be a much better predictor of risk in the district than test scores. Attendance as a symptom or cause appears to be a good short-term predictor of failure and dropping out. Twenty to twenty-five percent of the dropouts were doing reasonably well in school. They were attending regularly and were not failing when they dropped out. Pregnancy accounted for a sizable proportion of this group. Indeed, pregnancy was the risk factor for almost half of the female dropouts. Ninety percent of these young women did not return to school after their babies were born. A significant number of dropouts cited child care as an important problem.

Discipline Problems: Dropouts were more likely to have been suspended than the stay-ins (66% vs 49%), and more likely to have been expelled (11% vs 4%).
Early dropouts, grades 7 through 9, were more likely to have poor discipline records. Only four percent of the dropouts interviewed listed suspensions or expulsions as one of the major reasons they dropped out. A higher percentage volunteered out-of-school delinquency as the reason (6%). In response to the structured questions, a different picture emerged. Thirty-six percent of the dropouts indicated that they had been arrested, and 21 percent indicated that they had been in an institution. In contrast, 15 percent of the stay-ins reported arrests, and only four percent institutionalization.

Dropouts were asked whether anyone at school recommended that they drop out. Twenty-two percent responded "yes." In some cases, the problem was fighting and in some cases truancy. It does appear that out-of-school problems with the police and courts are, if anything, more common than serious problems in school for dropouts.

Problems With Work: Work was volunteered by about 20 percent of the dropouts as the reason they dropped out. Males, and black males in particular, were much more likely to cite work as an important cause. For some the problem was the inability to get part time work, for others the problems was working too much. Thirty-nine percent of the interviewed dropouts were working. On the average they were working 31 hours a week, but the median work week was 35.0 hours—just short of full time. The declining pool of high school students has apparently tempted employers to increase the hours they require of those willing to work. An excessively long work week may be an important cause of dropping out for many students. Only 40 percent of the dropouts reported working when they were interviewed from one to three years after they dropped out. The employed were generally pleased with their jobs, but so few were employed. The transcribed comments of the dropouts (see appendixes) include many comments on the frustrations of seeking employment without a diploma.

Poverty and Home Conditions: The interviewers had major problems in extracting meaningful information from the dropouts on both the occupation and salary of their parents. With this caveat, it did not appear that the dropouts and stay-ins differed much on these variables. There was no difference with whom the dropouts resided. Dropouts and stay-ins were unlikely to be living with both parents when they dropped out (29% vs 30%). A majority of both groups were living with a single mother (52% vs 54%). The differences on other family variables were more striking. Dropouts were more likely to have a mother with an eighth grade education (14% vs 8%) and less likely to have a parent who graduated from high school (35% vs 58%). The differences were even more dramatic for their fathers (20% vs 5%) and (29% vs 63%). The dropout had more brothers and sisters (4.8 vs 3.2) and was much more likely to have another dropout among his/her siblings (37% vs 14%). Taking low achievement and a record of school failure into account, the power of simple family counts was still impressive. Descriptive family composition information may be more useful than occupation and income in predicting students at risk.

What Dropouts Report as the Cause: During the dropout interviews, the dropouts were asked to think over what were the important reasons they dropped out. The interviewers were asked to let them have as much time as possible and to avoid, at all costs, prompting their responses. The responses were transcribed as presented by the interviewer (see appendixes). The dropouts were then asked to respond to a list of causes gleaned from the literature concerning school problems, family problems, problems with work, court-related problems, medical problems, and social problems. The open-ended responses were coded into categories by two independent raters. Overall, the dropouts gave 1.5 reasons as "most important." The frequency of the codings is given in the following table.

Open-Ended Responses to Reasons for Dropping Out.

Category	% Responding	Category	% Responding
Pregnancy/Child Care/ Marriage	25%	Delinquency	6%
Failure/Overage/Low Grades	20%	Family Problems	6%
Work (all mentions)	20%	Suspension/Expulsion	4%
Disliked School	17%	Illness/Health	4%
Attendance	11%	Drugs/Alcohol	3%
		Other Students	3%

The results parallel those found in High School and Beyond (Ekstrom, et al, 1986) with some important discrepancies. Pregnancy as a cause, as opposed to marriage, was reported at a much higher rate in the local sample. The total school-related causes were higher in HS&B than in the local unprompted responses. In the structured questionnaire section, the percentage figures in the local sample which combine "important cause" and "some cause" tend to parallel the "yes" response in HS&B.

The stay-in sample provides an interesting background from which to interpret the dropouts' responses to the structured questions. The low achieving, overage, stay-ins--with very few exceptions--reported higher rates of "problems" than did the dropouts. On all of the school-related causes, with one exception, the stay-ins reported equal or higher problem rates. Dropouts were two and a half times more likely to report that "Teacher/principal had it in for me" (28% vs 11%). There were no differences in the section on family problems between the two groups, although white female students were significantly identified in discriminant analysis by items on this section. The stay-ins were more likely to report problems in getting a part time job (33% vs 15%) and more likely to report that they couldn't work and study at the same time (49% vs 15%). In social causes, pregnancy (22% vs 7%), child care (19% vs 3%), drugs (11% vs 2%), and alcohol (12% vs 3%) were all cited by more dropouts than stay-ins.

It appears that the underachieving, overage graduate manages to avoid vendettas by administrators, court problems, pregnancy, drugs, and alcohol more successfully than their dropout peers. On all other items, they tend to report more problems. It could well be that the stay-ins have more support outside of school to persist despite these problems.

The survey results confirm that there is not one, or even a cluster of dropout causes. There are specific problems, some more common, some less, which affect individual dropouts. Discriminant analysis shows that race x gender subgroups can be significantly predicted by different patterns of problems. Drugs and alcohol abuse discriminated white dropouts from black dropouts. White students were significantly more likely to have racial problems and problems with other students. Marriage significantly identified white female students, while suspensions and expulsions discriminated male students. Family problems were significant discriminators for white females, while economic/work problems were significant discriminators for males and particularly black males.

The combination of dropout studies strongly suggests that dropout problems are not simple and generic but complex and highly particular. The low-incidence causes are not less important, just less frequent. Intervention programs should be designed to serve at-risk students with specific problems.

V. SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following structural-program issues have been identified and are being addressed: 1) Recent studies of the district K-12 curriculum sequence suggest that improvements need to be made in order to insure a clear and orderly progression of instruction. This need was also identified in the recent long-range plan approved by the Cincinnati Board of Education. 2) Teachers and students must be given better orientation regarding how to effectively handle different organizational patterns in the school, for example, K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12. Structural and program articulation is necessary in order to insure educational continuity. 3) Improvements are critically needed in neighborhood schools in terms of program offerings and staff assignment.

The following policies and procedures have particular impacts on high-risk students: 1) The district has had a policy that requires high school students to pass the last quarter in order to be promoted to the next grade, irrespective of how good their performance was in the other three quarters in a school year. This policy is discouraging to high-risk students by increasing the probability of failure. Failure has been found to be highly correlative to students dropping out of school.* 2) The current discipline policy and procedure allows and encourages staff to utilize negative punishment which is counter-productive with most high school students resulting in excessive numbers of suspensions and expulsions. 3) The current marking practices and promotion policies permit retention of high-risk students particularly at grades seven and eight.

*This policy was changed on November 23, 1987.

VI. EXISTING RESOURCES

Extensive research was done to identify existing in-school and out-of-school resources that could contribute to the reduction of dropouts and help make the system work for all youth. Our operating strategy is to use existing resources and funding wherever possible. When new programs are required we will look for linkage and synergy with existing programs.

The following programs and efforts presently serve at-risk students. A more detailed description of each is shown later in this Section.

Partners in Education
Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates
Infant Child Care Program
Project Continued Success
The Prevention of First Grade Failure
Reduction of Retention at the Seventh Grade Level
The Comprehensive Plan for Serving High Risk Students
Improving Attendance Among High Risk Students
The Social and Academic Demonstration Schools
The Extended Early Childhood Education Program
A Comprehensive Student Data Base
Vocational Education

While Cincinnati already has a number of excellent and successful programs, we lacked a comprehensive total system vision and plan to better mobilize these resources, create synergy between them and identify additional gaps that require action. The role of the CYC is to establish a vision; facilitate and oversee; secure alignment and cooperation; and provide financial and human resources.

The intervention strategies described in Section VII are directed at high leverage points identified in our assessment of dropout causes. All interventions are intimately linked with the Cincinnati Public Schools. We will also utilize the following organizations in significant resource or execution roles in these interventions.

Organization	Intervention
Private Industry Council	Jobs Network
University of Cincinnati	Pre-School
Cincinnati Public Library	Center for Higher Education
Greater Cincinnati Foundation	Last Resort Financing
Cincinnati Commission on Youth	Dropout Recovery
Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates	JCG Grade 11
Big Brothers and Big Sisters	Mentoring

Additionally, each new program element will work closely with existing, related resources to develop linkage, support and synergy. These linkages for the preschool program are shown near the end of this section.

Cincinnati Public Schools' Efforts to Serve At-Risk Students

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION is a districtwide partnership primarily between the private sector and the school system to insure that each school in the district has a supportive partner. The program is administered and coordinated by the private sector. Individual schools and their partners have engaged in a wide variety of program activities designed to improve student achievement. In one elementary school the partner has provided an achievement incentive fund that allows a student to earn up to $200 per school year for meeting pre-identified achievement goals. The funds are placed in escrow and are available to students with the accumulated interest upon their graduation from high school. In one senior high school an annual scholarship fund has been established by the partner as an incentive for students to pursue college-bound course work and be able to financially attend college with assistance. A variety of creative ideas are being implemented throughout schools in the district with programs such as mentors, tutors, career education, attendance, work experience, etcetera.

CINCINNATI YOUTH COLLABORATIVE is a program designed to get the entire community involved with the school system in reducing school dropouts, preparing students for entry level jobs upon graduation and building bridges to college for disadvantaged students. This community collaborative is co-chaired by the superintendent of schools, the president of the Procter & Gamble Company and a city council member. Key service organizations, as well as individuals from government, private industry and human services, are represented through the collaborative structure. Specific measurable objectives have been established for reducing dropouts, improving the number of youth entering the job market, increasing the number of students attending college, increasing the number of children involved in early childhood education programs and improving the overall effectiveness of the instructional program.

JOBS FOR CINCINNATI GRADUATES, a school-to-work transition program, is aimed at preparing twelfth grade high risk students to effectively compete in the private sector job market. While this program affiliates with America's Jobs for Graduates, it is unique in that it was initiated totally by funding from the local private sector and has served as a model for the state of Ohio. The program is targeting twelfth grade students that are most likely to experience difficulty securing stable employment after graduation. The program has maintained an 85% successful job placement rate.

INFANT CHILD CARE PROGRAM provides on-site infant and toddler child care for senior high school students who are parents. This program is currently operating in one senior high school and has allowed 30 girls who were at risk of dropping out of school to attend school regularly and develop child rearing skills simultaneously. This program is different from a regular child care program in that a very young child (two months) may be brought into the center, thus allowing a girl to return to school at the earliest possible moment following delivery. The major drawback with this program is that only a few children can be served at one time due to the exceedingly strict health and

safety codes that must be met. In general, the program has proven to be successful in helping to keep the majority of the students served in school where the obstacle to attendance was the need for child care.

PROJECT CONTINUED SUCCESS is a program designed to encourage more eleventh and twelfth grade students to prepare for effective entry into college. This project evolved from the creative exploration of the Aiken High School staff with its partner in education, the General Electric Company. The program recruits up to 130 students annually to participate in a rigorous enrichment and motivational plan designed to enroll students in more challenging course work with effective support systems. Junior and senior student success is measured by improved student scores on the ACT, improved grade achievement and acceptance into college. The General Electric Company provides each participating student with a mentor. In addition to tutoring support students are engaged in stress management workshops, career education workshops and field trip enrichment activities. Parents are encouraged to participate in the parent component of the program which is designed to teach them how to be supportive of their student's educational developmental needs. Finally, nearing the end of the senior year, students are involved in a college transition seminar. This experience involves creating mock environments where students are exposed to the kind of expectations that major universities will have for and expect from matriculating students. Over a three year period this program has significantly increased the number of graduates from Aiken High School that have attended college and succeeded.

THE PREVENTION OF FIRST GRADE FAILURE is a program designed to identify, monitor and serve first grade students who are as risk of falling behind in basic reading skills. Special efforts are being put forth to coordinate the services provided by the regular primary reading teacher and the supplemental (ECIA) reading teachers. Special individualized plans are being developed (IEPs) for students who need remedial intervention services. All basal and supplemental reading materials are being synthesized as a result of this program. The program will be evaluated based upon a decrease or increase in reading failures at the first grade level.

REDUCTION OF RETENTION AT THE SEVENTH GRADE LEVEL is a program similar to the first grade program except that the primary target group is students who have been retained at least once prior to arriving at the seventh grade. Following individual identification, these students are assigned to reading and math classes with a maximum of 15 students for each teacher. A home school facilitator is assigned to each student for the purpose of insuring that the student is in school regularly. The home school coordinator works with each family in an attempt to increase the amount of support for the child and parental involvement with the school. Special inservice is provided for the teachers and support staff in order to develop a team approach to working with the student cohort group. The evaluation is based upon the umber of students in the cohort group that are not retained for the second year.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SERVING HIGH RISK STUDENTS is an internal working document designed to provide administrative direction for individual school and central office administrative staff regarding how the district is addressing high risk students. This is an evolving plan that is reviewed and revised annually based upon evaluation results and the availability of new resources. The initial plan contains the following six components:

1. Identification of High Risk Students - Such decisions must evolve from feelings and opinions into a systematic process for identifying students most in danger of not doing well in school.

2. Intervention Strategies - This section of the plan attempts to systematically coordinate all preventive and remedial efforts to serve high risk students. It is imperative that such strategies are coordinated and systemic as opposed to a set of isolated activities.

3. Monitoring Student Performance/Quality of Instruction - This component seeks to monitor the performance of students simultaneously with monitoring the quality of instruction. Such a dual monitoring system represents the nucleus of any effective plan to serve high risk students.

4. Effective Communication - Because education is a people-to-people business it is imperative that special emphasis be placed on insuring effective communication and articulation among and between all pertinent parties. This component is concentrating on identifying ways to strengthen communication and articulation among and between students, teachers, administration, parents, community, etcetera.

5. Staff Development - This component seeks to keep staff apprised of the latest skills and information that appeared to be related to the success of high risk students in school.

6. Research, Monitoring and Evaluation - The comprehensive plan, along with the individual program strategies, is being carefully evaluated in order to determine the merit of their continuation and/or need for revision.

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE AMONG HIGH RISK STUDENTS is a districtwide program to improve the daily attendance of students who are at risk of poor achievement. Based upon a standard percentage set by the school district, all schools set objectives to improve both staff and student attendance. Student support service staff members are assigned a special caseload group of students that have histories of poor attendance and are held accountable for these students making significant improvement during the school year.

A systemwide attendance incentive program is available to individual schools to encourage staff to improve their attendance. Schools accomplishing their staff attendance objective are given financial rewards to be used in local school programming. Securing and maintaining the expected standard of student and staff attendance is measured through the district's Design for School Excellence program. Attendance is one of four mandatory indicators for excellence in the district.

THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS are two elementary schools committed to demonstrating the effective delivery of educational services to high risk students. These schools are committed to the principle of collaboration between teachers, principals and community persons in order to insure the strongest possible support base for student achievement. These schools are placing equal emphasis on students' cognitive and affective development. These schools will be evaluated based upon a comparison with other schools having similar student body makeups and by the extent to which they improve their student achievement performance over past years.

THE EXTENDED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM is a public school/private sector venture designed to pilot formal educational intervention for three-and four-year-olds. Initially this program will be associated with the two elementary social and academic demonstration schools. The idea is to have formal sequential educational development beginning as early as three years of age and extending without interruption into the first year of compulsory education. The program is being funded through the private sector and jointly developed by school system and private sector staff. It is anticipated that this early educational intervention will prepare at-risk students to achieve at a normal rate by the time they enter the first grade. Students in this program will be compared with their peers who will not have the opportunity for early childhood educational experiences.

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT DATA BASE is critical to any comprehensive plan to address students at risk. A good data base allows the school district to maintain throughout the students' years in school the academic, social and economic histories of students. The latter information is extremely valuable in analyzing the primary corollaries to students ultimately dropping out of school as well as projecting students and families with early intervention needs. In addition, such a data base will allow the district to disaggregate student data and more precisely identify groups at risk. This program was approved by the board of education in 1985-86 and is scheduled for completion at the end of the 1988-89 school year.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION is playing a vital role in our school district's efforts to serve students at risk. We have expanded our occupational work adjustment program at the middle school level and the occupational work experience program at the senior high school level. These two programs continue to serve as a conduit for keeping certain students in school longer and allowing such students the opportunity to develop work skills prior to graduation. Because vocational regulations will allow any student who is 16 years of age to enter a job training program, we have utilized this non-traditional alternative for selected overage students who would otherwise leave school with no job readiness preparations. Traditionally, such students are put through an exploratory work training program to determine their interests, skill levels and attitude about vocational training. While there has been no long term follow-up study to determine if such students eventually earn a GED or adult high school diploma, most students completing the vocational training are placed on jobs.

VII. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

This section gives details of the following intervention strategies:

A. Constructivist Preschool Pilot Program
B. Higher Education Information Center
C. Last Resort Financing
D. Jobs
E. Jobs Network
F. Dropout Recovery Program
G. Leadership Development Training for Teachers and Administrators in Selected Schools With High Dropout Rates
H. Tutoring
I. QUEST
J. MIET/TESA
K. Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates—11th Grade Program
L. Mentoring
M. Ed Venture (Club Ed)
N. Instructional Reorganization/Improved Guidance/Counseling System
O. Instructional Regrouping at the Middle School
P. Identification and Assessment of Cincinnati Public Schools Policies, Procedures, and School Structures
Q. Review of and Modifications in the Cincinnati Public Schools Curriculum
R. Assessment of Personnel Within C.P.S. (Personnel Orientation)
S. Evaluation and Assessment of Facilities, Equipment, and Curriculum Materials
T. Improve Organization and Scheduling

A. Constructivist Preschool Pilot Program

1. Brief description of the intervention: Two half-day preschools, using the Constructivist curriculum model, will be opened at Taft and McKinley Social and Academic Skills Demonstration Elementary Schools to serve low-income three-year-olds in those attendance districts. In addition to the classroom programs, strong parent/family support components will be developed in conjunction with Demonstration School plans.

2. Student population impacted: Three-year-old preschool students.

3. Major activities: The Constructivist model for early childhood education focuses on helping children to construct knowledge by learning to solve problems--both socially and cognitively. Low teacher-student ratios (1:5) will allow a high degree of individual attention to each child's developmental progress, resulting in children being better prepared for both the four-year-old preschool (Headstart) programs at the schools, and ultimately, kindergarten and first grade. Ongoing teachers' training will be provided by consultants from UC and other early childhood teachers from each school will also be allowed to participate in this training when time permits.

4. Specific causes addressed: Failure, not ready for kindergarten/first grade, lack of learning skills, low self-esteem/lack of success, and low expectations for success/feelings of inferiority.

5. Rationale for intervention: Several nationally publicized studies show that low-income children who are at risk for school failure are much less likely to drop out after attending a high quality preschool. The Constructivist model of early childhood education focuses on helping children learn how to learn (i.e., construct knowledge), fostering self-esteem, and building on children's successes. Additionally, recent research indicates that children in constructivist classrooms have a better understanding of place value in later mathematics instruction.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Short-term: fewer special education/remediation placements, lower first grade failure rates. Long-term: reduced dropouts and higher achievement/life success rates.

7. Impact date: Short-term results should be measurable within the first nine to twelve months of operation; naturally long-term effects will not be visible for eight to sixteen years.

8. Evaluation of impact: Although our plans are not yet finalized, we will probably use an ethnographic approach for evaluating the shorter term results.

9. Description of budget items: Preschools for three-year-olds at two demonstration elementary schools. Two half-day sessions at each school, to better prepare children for elementary school (space provided by schools). First-year equipment costs @$24M; two instructors @$23.5M/year each; four instructor assistants @$11.5M each; one Family Services assistant @$10.8M/year; consultant @$24.5M first year ($19.5M ongoing); materials include: classroom supplies, snacks, medical and dental visits for children, travel, postage, etc. @$11.3M/year; playgrounds @$5M+ each, first year; family training, conferences, daycare support @$25-30M/year (inflation @5%; part-year operation in 87-88 deducts $41M--salaries, consultant, daycare support).

10. Follow-up activities:

    a. Research: Document success of children in preschools and effectiveness of Constructivist approach, to provide data for legislative changes. Includes cost (first year) of baseline testing for children in preschools and control groups @$50/child; ongoing costs for recordkeeping, observation and statistical analysis.

    b. Legislative Advocacy: Develop plan for getting state funding for preschool and other needed programs (i.e., daycare) for high-risk children. Much of this work involves working with existing children's advocacy groups (Children's Defense Fund, CED, National Association for the Education of Young Children) to develop and support needed legislation. Costs would be for "events" for legislators, or travel to Columbus for meetings.

B. Higher Education Information Center

1. Brief description of the intervention: Establish an information clearing house for parents, students, guidance counselors and community on college admissions, financial aid and post-secondary-school opportunities. Additionally, be a source of professional development for counselors and teachers.

2. Student population impacted: Grades 7-12, school dropouts, graduates.

3. Major activities: Publicity and outreach efforts to adults and help guidance counselors reach students not in post-secondary education. Training of students/parents on Financial Aid Applications.

4. Specific causes addressed: Lack of information on financial aid, colleges, and other post-secondary opportunities.

5. Rationale for intervention: Provide information/resource on requirements/opportunities and post-secondary education.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Having X% of city school students use the facility and increase number of college/trade school bound students.

7. Impact date: End of each calendar year starting with 1988.

8. Evaluation of impact: Detailed logs will be maintained.

9. Description of budget items: Office space in central location (i.e., public library) plus a staff with computer and normal office needs.

C. Last Resort Financing

1. Brief description of the intervention: Provide an additional source of post-secondary-school financing.

2. Student population impacted: Twelfth grade and graduates of Cincinnati area.

3. Major activities: Provide funding to student; possibly tie-in with summer jobs to be initiated at Taft High School.

4. Specific causes addressed: Cannot afford college.

5. Rationale for intervention: Based on survey of Taft High School; 18 out of 24 surveyed who did not go to college said they would have attended if they received tuition.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Those not going to college due to lack of funds will be reduced by 33 percent by year three.

7. Impact date: Year one.

8. Evaluation of impact: A log of cases receiving help will be maintained.

9. Description of budget items: Money and possibly jobs pledged by corporations.

D. **Jobs**

1. Brief description of the intervention: Compact between business and schools where business promises priority hiring of qualified graduates while school promises continued improvement in specific performance areas.

2. Student population impacted: All students interested in work following graduation.

3. Major activities:

   a. Gain business commitment to priority hiring.
   b. Schools establish goals.

4. Specific causes addressed: Increase student expectations of what is possible for them. Provides incentive for graduating.

5. Rationale for intervention: Low student expectations and hopelessness are important causes of dropouts.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention:

   a. Short-term: increased job placement of graduating seniors.
   b. Long-term: reduced dropouts.

7. Impact date: Jobs after year one. Dropout reduction after four to five years.

8. Evaluation of impact: Records of jobs, youth unemployment rates, dropout rate.

9. Description of budget items: Personnel budgets of participating companies. Number of jobs to be created are still in the planning stages.

E. **Jobs Network**

1. Brief description of the intervention: The Jobs Network will coordinate the job development efforts of several youth-serving organizations such as the Cincinnati Public School Vocational Education, Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates, Youth Employment Services and the Citizens' Committee on Youth, for the purpose of facilitating the match of pre-screened youth with employer job openings.

2. Student population impacted: Students grades 9-12, at-risk students grades 9-12, graduating seniors and dropouts.

3. Major activities: A Jobs Network unit will be established to coordinate and facilitate the appropriate job match between employers and youth. It will provide a central contact point from employers seeking youth for jobs. The Jobs Network will function as an information broker for employers and youth-serving organizations.

4. Specific causes addressed: It will address the following causes for dropping out: need to work, low self-esteem, low achievement, lack of success, and conflict between work and school schedules.

5. Rationale for intervention: It will address the youth's need to work. An appropriate job match will also result in the youth having higher self-esteem, positive feelings of achievement, and increased economic self-sufficiency. All of these elements will reduce the probability of dropping out.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention:

   a. The number of appropriate job orders from employers.
   b. The number of students and dropouts placed on part or full time jobs (permanent and seasonal) will increase by a rate of 10 to 15 percent per each of the five years.

7. Impact date: The initial impact of the Jobs Network will be within six to nine months.

8. Evaluation of impact: A follow-up system will be developed to evaluate the quality and quantity of youth referrals, job matches, and Job Network/organizational linkages.

9. Description of budget items: Total $60,000, Staff: 2 (1 professional, 1 technical professional/clerical = $25,000 + fringes, technical = $15,000 + fringes); Training: in-house and state agencies (no cost); Materials: telephone, computer, marketing materials (in-kind).

F. Dropout Recovery Program

1. Brief description of the program: This program is aimed at providing educational experiences to school dropouts. These young people will be provided the following training:

   a. Computer-assisted basic education.
   b. Pre-employment and job readiness training.
   c. Occupational training of their choice to monitor student progress on a regular basis.
   d. To provide a permanent job or college educational assistance to students who complete the program.

   Other student activities include: individualized educational plans, counseling and mentoring, and client tracking.

2. Student population impacted: Thirty dropouts, male and female.

3. Major activities: This program will be housed in the Citizens Committee on Youth (CCY) training program sponsored by the City of Cincinnati. Specific activities will include: client intake and assessment, computer-assisted basic education, development of career components, development of job attainment competencies, job survival competencies, leadership and self-development competencies. This will be done through individualized instructional plans.

4. Specific causes addressed: This intervention will address the following: all dropouts need to work, low achievement, lack of successful experiences, lack of occupational skills.

5. Rationale for intervention: Experience shows that when specific causes of dropouts are addressed through a non-formal educational training program, many youths are able to acquire GED and thus become eligible for jobs. The program at CCY is highly motivating to students at risk.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention:

   a. The number of students acquiring GED certificates
   b. The number of completers who are placed in jobs.

   If the pilot project is successful, it will be expanded to provide similar services to a larger number of youths and students at risk.

7. Impact date: the initial impact of this program will be assessed at the end of the 1988-89 school year.

8. Evaluation of impact: Evaluation will be the physical count of the number of graduates and placement as a ratio of the intake.

9. Description of budget items: Total budget $100,000; per-pupil cost, $3,300. Equipment, materials, etc.

G. Leadership Development Training for Teachers and Administrators in Selected Schools With High Dropout Rates

1. Brief description of the Intervention: Leadership training that expands knowledge about skills in working with "high-risk" students will be provided to teachers and administrators in selected junior and senior high schools.

2. Student population impacted: Students in grades 7-12.

3. Major activities: Leadership training designed for the staff.

4. Specific causes addressed: The intervention will address the following causes of dropouts: failure, treated unfairly, dislike school, suspension, expulsion, conflict with other students, school uninteresting, poor attendance, lack of learning skills, lack of guidance/counseling, low achievement, low self-esteem, lack of success, high pressure schedules, alienation, conflict between work and school schedules.

5. Rationale for intervention: Because teachers and administrators will have the knowledge and skill needed to work effectively with this group of students, they will understand the nature of their problems and have the ability to be responsive in the way that meets the needs of the students individually and collectively.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Reductions in failures, suspensions, expulsions, and absenteeism. In addition, the achievement of these students should markedly increase.

7. Impact date: At the end of year one.

8. Evaluation of impact: By comparing data from previous years on the variables stated in six (6) above.

9. Description of budget items: Development of training program, $10,000; training materials, $10,000; stipends to participants, $30,000.

H. Tutoring

1. Brief description of the intervention: The Tutoring Program will work with students on a one-to-one basis and in small groups with the same educational needs. Tutors will be identified from the Partners In Education program and any other available source. Students will be able to receive extra help to accomplish their educational needs.

2. Student population impacted: Two hundred students, grades 9-12.

3. Major activities: The students will meet with the tutors individually or in small groups after school. They will be given instruction in the academic areas of their need. They will also be helped in completing their homework assignments.

4. Specific causes addressed: Low achievement and failure.

5. Rationale for intervention: There is ample evidence to show that tutoring helps students achieve academic success. Bloom's "Two Sigma Study."

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Improved grades and reduced dropout rate.

7. Impact date: At the end of the first full school year, namely 1988-89.

8. Evaluation of impact: The academic achievement and dropout rate of these students will be compared with those of an equivalent group.

9. Description of budget items: Materials and supplies.

I. QUEST

1. Brief description of the intervention: QUEST program is aimed at helping students at risk acquire social skills necessary for successful performance in school and on the job. It also helps the students in improving their self-esteem.

2. Student population impacted: At-risk students in the Taft High School in grades 9-12.; Approximately 200 students.

3. Major activities: The students will participate in group activities aimed at learning social skills such as responsibility, communications, group interaction. Training will be given to the students in small groups by their teachers. An individual detailed training program is an important part of the QUEST program.

4. Specific causes addressed: Low self-esteem, poor social skills, and poor learning skills.

5. Rationale for intervention: QUEST program is an NDN approved intervention program which is being used nationally with good success with high-risk students.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: The intervention will produce significant changes in student self-esteem, low self-esteem, poor social skills, and poor learning skills.

7. Impact date: At the end of every school year.

8. Evaluation of impact: The impact of the intervention will be evaluated in terms of changes before and after by using various types of instruments.

9. Description of budget items:

   A. One-time expenses, 1987-88.

   1. Payments to QUEST, $10,000
   2. Materials for the program, $14,000
   3. Teacher training, $2,000
   4. Travel and meeting expenses, $1,500

   B. Recurring annual expenditures after 1987-88.

   1. Payments to QUEST, $3,000
   2. Materials for the program, $11,700
   3. Teacher training, $1,000
   4. Travel and meeting expenses, $1,500

J. MIET/TESA

1. Brief description of the intervention: MIET and TESA are staff development aimed at improving teachers' instructional behavior. Included in the training are strategies for setting high expectations, effective management of time, efficient management techniques.

2. Student population impacted: All students grades 9-12.

3. Major activities: Teachers will be given 20 hours of training in the MIET/TESA technique.

4. Specific causes addressed: Low student achievement.

5. Rationale for intervention: A number of studies on effective schools and effective classrooms have indicated a need for such training.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Better grades, low failure rate, low dropout rate.

7. Impact date: End of every school year.

8. Evaluation of impact: Ratio of failures and dropouts after the intervention will be compared with those before the intervention.

9. Description of budget items: Start-up cost, $9,600; thereafter, annual cost, $8,400.

K. Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates--11th Grade Program

1. Brief description of the intervention: The program is designed to increase the likelihood of high school graduation; to promote career exploration, job readiness and motivation required for successful employment.

2. Student population impacted: Students will be selected for participation based on the following criteria:

   2.1 Below average grades
   2.2 Below average test scores
   2.3 Poor or irregular attendance
   2.4 Teacher/counselor referral
   2.5 Self-referral

3. Major activities:

   3.1 Employability training
   3.2 Counseling/Mentoring
   3.3 Career Association (student-run leadership organization)
   3.4 Tutoring or referral for tutoring for basic skill remediation
   3.5 Parent involvement and support

4. Specific causes addressed:

   4.1 Low esteem
   4.2 Poor performance
   4.3 Pregnancy/child care problems
   4.4 Inadequate basic skills to meet employer requirements
   4.5 Home/family instability

5. Rationale for intervention: The current twelfth grade program addresses the above problems related to the dropout situation in Cincinnati. Program administrators, high school administrators, staff members, and JCG job specialists believe that addressing the issues a year earlier will result in greater positive impact.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention:

   6.1 Pretests/Posttests.
   6.2 Improved grade point average.
   6.3 Reduced absences and tardiness rates.
   6.4 Amount of contact time dedicated to training, counseling, leadership activities, etc.

7. Impact date: Impact will be observed and documented on an ongoing basis.

   7.1 Recordkeeping for all training and related activities.
   7.2 Monitoring of grades, test scores, attendance throughout school year.
   7.3 Summer or part-time employment performance evaluation.

8. Evaluation of impact: The close working relationship between JCG and the host schools has resulted in the opportunity for complete access to teachers, counselors and administrators. Their evaluations, in addition to those conducted by the JCG in-school staff, will provide a complete assessment of the intervention strategies.

9. Description of budget items:

   9.1 Staff: One, preferably two career specialists.
   9.2 Training: Availability of students for a minimum of 80 hours training/counseling and related activities during the school year. Continuing counseling during summer employment.
   9.3 Materials: Curriculum materials for each participant.

L. Mentoring

1. Brief description of the intervention: Via one-on-one contact (i.e., Big Brothers/Sisters), has an important impact on the value system, while providing a role model. Also provide tutoring to ensure strong academic progress, career counseling.

2. Student population impacted: Taft High School, grades 7, 8 and 9--plus two feeder schools, Porter and Bloom.

3. Major activities: Set up Big Brothers/Sisters for each mentee as a role model. Establish tutor program with help from local colleges, Pan Hellanic Council and high school Christian Service programs. For career mentoring, have field trips, plant visits, college visits to review career opportunities.

4. Specific causes addressed: Low self-esteem, graduating does not help job seeking and low achievement.

5. Rationale for intervention: Providing one-on-one contact will help students realize people care and that school is important for self-improvement.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Reduced dropout rate among grades 7-10.

7. Impact Date: Year two.

8. Evaluation of impact: By improved attendance, and results by grades 7-10 as well as reduced dropout rates.

9. Description of budget items: People volunteer for mentoring. Central coordination and additional staff at Big Brothers/Sisters.

M. **Ed Venture (Club Ed)**

1. Brief description of the intervention: Use unique approaches and vehicles to carry the messages of the importance of finishing education, the need to work hard to achieve career/educational goals. Use the curiosity of students by exposing them to the opportunities and challenges ahead.

2. Student population impacted: Initially grades 7-9, then 4-6, 10-12.

3. Major activities: Have local hero (Reggie Williams) speak, visit Miami U., get students to form their own leadership to plan/organize future events.

4. Specific causes addressed: Low self-esteem. Low achievement.

5. Rationale for intervention: Offering messages through idols will carry a big impact. Additionally, raise the students' curiosity of the many opportunities available beyond school.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Junior high dropouts will reduce by 30%.

7. Impact date: Year two.

8. Evaluation of impact: Improvement in self-esteem and achievement at the end of the project will be compared with the baseline data. Dropout rate before and after the intervention will also be reported.

9. Description of budget items: Identify leader in pilot school to get this started. Ongoing, minor costs (i.e., field trip to Miami U., visit plants) will need to be covered.

N. Instructional Reorganization/Improved Guidance/Counseling System.

1. Brief description of the intervention: The programmatic thrust will be to improve the instructional delivery system, increased guidance services, increased instructional support, improved staff development activities, and improved parental and community involvement.

2. Student population impacted: All students at Taft, Bloom, and Porter.

3. Major activities: Inservice, block scheduling, interdisciplinary teaming.

4. Specific causes addressed: Pregnancy, low achievement, low self-esteem, lack of success, lack of learning skills, lack of guidance/counseling, conflict with other students, and lack of parental encouragement.

5. Rationale for intervention:

   a. The instructional program will use strategies such as: CAI, interdisciplinary teaming, and instructional strategies to address these items.
   b. The guidance department will intensify its efforts with a reduced counselor-student ratio.
   c. There will be an increase of support services such as VT, Nurse, Advisory Program, Mentors, and Tutors.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Reduction of the dropout rate, increased daily attendance, increased promotion rate, increased graduation rate, and increased achievement scores.

7. Impact date: Graduated—over a three-year period (see pp 3-6 of Taft Project Overview).

8. Evaluation of the impact: Achievement, measured by standardized tests; annual attendance rates; promotion rate.

9. Description of budget items: Staff: current and additional staff; Training: inservice activities through Staff Development (MIET/TESA and QUEST); Materials: computer hardware, software, supplemental materials.

O. Instructional Regrouping at the Middle School

1. Brief description of the intervention: This intervention is aimed at improving the achievement of students at Taft High School in order that the percentage of students at or above the national norm be increased by 20% and that the percentage of students accepted from the applicants by colleges be improved.

2. Student population impacted: Students grades 9-12 at Taft High School.

3. Major activities: An improved delivery system of guidance services for these students; an improved delivery system for instruction for students and offer appropriate level of the CORE curriculum as defined by Cincinnati Schools; tutoring to provide success, encouragement, and instructional assistance for students; maintain and enhance current vocational and career programs.

4. Specific causes addressed: Low achievement, need for increased counseling, low motivation.

5. Rationale for intervention: Research shows that improved counseling and other support services to the students coupled with provision of necessary instructional materials improves their chances of success.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Increase in achievement and increase in number of graduates accepted in colleges.

7. Impact date: First time—end of the year 1988.

8. Evaluation of impact: Comparison of each year's data with the baseline data collected in 1986-87.

9. Description of budget items: Staff salaries, staff training, materials and supplies, equipment, computer software.

P. Identification and Assessment of Cincinnati Public Schools Policies, Procedures, and School Structures

1. Brief description of the intervention: Identify and assess in the Cincinnati Public Schools policies and procedures those areas current or potential where action is needed to enhance the ability of students to function effectively in school and prepare for post secondary education and/or the world of work.

2. Student population impacted: K-12.

3. Major activities: Review of system reports and other data in the areas mentioned in order to identify problem areas that need attention. Convene committees (study groups) to develop background data that may lead to policy revision. Interact with school base staff in order to seek their input for the intervention.

4. Specific causes addressed: Suspension/expulsion; conflict with other students; poor school attendance; alienation; negative peer pressure.

5. Rationale for intervention: Improve school climate; students will spend more time in school; students will develop positive self-esteem.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Measurable targets will be set for each intervention and the target will be adjusted each year over the next five years.

7. Impact date: Six to twelve months or the school year after the introduction of the intervention.

8. Evaluation of impact: Evaluation on the basis of how well we have met the targets which have been set. Targets will determined by a set amount each year over the five-year period.

9. Description of budget items: Additional staff may be required for additional intervention programs.

Q. Review of and Modifications in the Cincinnati Public Schools Curriculum

1. Brief description of the intervention:

   a. Develop a sequential Kindergarten-12 Reading Program.
   b. Develop a sequential Kindergarten-12 Mathematics Program.
   c. Develop/revise English Composition program.
   d. Review and redesign the Vocational Education Program as needs indicate.
   e. Establish a competency-based educational program to address aquisition of basic skills.

2. Student population impacted: Focus on students. Kindergarten-12 with special emphasis on primary students and students currently at the secondary level experiencing difficulty.

3. Major activities:

   a. Interaction with school-based staff.
   b. Curriculum development.
   c. Correlation Guide.
   d. Identification and selection of materials to address specific student needs.
   e. Integration of technology into the curriculum.

4. Specific causes addressed:

   a. Lack of learning skills
   b. Curriculum not relevant
   c. Low Achievement
   d. Low Self-esteem
   e. Lack of success
   f. Alienation
   g. Inequitable academic standards and expectations.

5. Rationale for intervention:

   a. Improvement in school climate. Students will spend more time in school.
   b. Students who are two or more years behind have been identified as potential dropouts. Research suggests that overage for grade is the major cause for dropouts. By revamping the curriculum to address specific needs in a structured fashion we will be able to increase the achievement level of dropout-prone students.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention:

   a. Number of students leaving the primary grades reading above the national norm will be increased substantially and will be sustained through the secondary grades.
   b. We will see an increase in attendance in the intermediate grades.
   c. We will see a reduction of the failure rate.
   d. We will experience a higher graduation rate.
   e. The number of students enrolling in college will increase.
   f. All students will receive a High School diploma.

7. Impact date: Each year of program implementation a degree of measurable impact will be achieved. With program refinement we will be able to identify the degree of change.

8. Evaluation of impact: Each program component will contain an evaluation design to determine the effect of that component in the change process. It is anticipated that change will positively occur in achievement tests. SAT scores, reduced dropouts, and increased attendance.

9. Description of budget items: Inkind staff time, materials, etc.

R. Assessment of Personnel Within C.P.S. (Personnel Orientation).

1. Brief description of the intervention: Review, and if needed, change personnel selection, orientation, training and appraisal process to assure that the staff is appropriate to attain the goals of the Cincinnati Public Schools.

2. Student population impacted: Students in grades K-12.

3. Major activities:

   a. Review and revise staff appraisal program for certificated personnel.
      - Staff training inservice
      - Peer appraisal
   b. Continue staff recruitment to increase the number of male and minority teachers.
   c. Staff recognition programs.

4. Specific causes addressed:

   - Treated unfairly
   - Poor attendance
   - Lack of guidance and counseling
   - Low self-esteem
   - Low achievement
   - Failure
   - Lack of learning skills
   - School doesn't care

5. Rationale for intervention: Improve the overall performance of the staff. Increase the ability of the staff to work effectively with at-risk students. Provide positive role models for students. Improve the staff's ability to enhance student's self-esteem through reinforcement of positive behavior.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Improved school and classroom climate will cause an increase in students' attendance and achievement.

7. Impact Date: After the first full year of implementation.

8. Evaluation of impact: Peabody Test of Self-Esteem, School Information System (SIS) Survey results of students, staff and parent attitude toward their school.

9. Description of budget items: Staff, Training: consultant fees, Materials: training materials to be determined.

S. Evaluation and Assessment of Facilities, Equipment, and Curriculum Materials

1. Brief description of the intervention: Evaluate the availability of appropriate facilities, equipment, textbooks, and other materials necessary for the successful implementation of courses in the curriculum.

2. Student population impacted: Kindergarten-12 with focus on grades where potential dropouts seem imminent.

3. Major activities: Inventory of each school site, of its facilities and instructional support materials. Consider availability and appropriateness of inventory.

4. Specific causes addressed:

- Failure
- School uninteresting
- Lack of learning skills
- Lack of success
- Alienation
- Curriculum not relevant
- Overage
- Dislike school

5. Rationale for intervention: Will provide required materials for each course. High interest materials--textbooks for students to take home to improve study skills and academic performance--reduce failures.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: Reduction in course and grade failures. Improved achievement level.

7. Impact date: Gradual improvement beginning with the end of the first year of the program.

8. Evaluation of Impact:

   a. Assessment of quality of materials in relation to the curriculum.
   b. Teacher survey of impact of the materials.
      Student survey of interest in school.
   c. Reduced number of failures and dropouts.
      Improved teacher skill in the use of a variety of instructional material.

9. Description of budget items: Staff, Training, Materials: textbooks, modern instructional equipment, experimental math labs, science lab equipment, math manipulatives.

T. Improve Organization and Scheduling

1. Brief description of the intervention: Review the way our schools are organized to ensure that it is optimum for the delivery of the curriculum and co-curricular activities consistent with student needs. Review current systems for course and student scheduling to ensure that students have access to those courses essential to their future plans.

2. Student population impacted: K-12

3. Major activities: Grouping for instruction. Review scheduling, i.e., no student who fails should have the same teacher the next year. Review the need for programs that have flexible starting times that are more in tune to students' needs i.e., working students - fifth quarter for catch-up. Review the ability of students to take two courses in the same academic area simultaneously. Explore programs that respond to the need for dropout re-entries into the C.P.S.

4. Specific causes addressed:

   - Overage
   - Poor attendance
   - Lack of success
   - Lack of child care
   - Family problems
   - Need to work
   - Conflict between work and school schedules

5. Rationale for intervention: Provide progress toward diploma for students who cannot do it within the required time frame or the standard organization.

6. Measurable impact of this intervention: High-risk students will accumulate more credits toward graduation.

7. Impact date: The end of the first year.

8. Evaluation of impact: Those students identified as high-risk will accumulate more credits and increase graduation rate.

9. Description of budget items: Staff: Increase for some programs, Training, and Materials.

SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS

A summary listing of interventions, along with other basic information, follows on the next page.

Intervention/ Duration/ Location	Person/ Agency Responsible	Funds Required				Funding Source
		1987-88	1988-89	1889-90	1990-91	
A. Constructivist Pre-School Pilot Program 3 years McKinley Elem Taft Elem.	Cincinnati Public Schools Procter & Gamble	$180,000	$180,000	$190,000		Corporate Gifts P&G=$50,000 Foundations Greater Cincinnati Foundation=$24,000 Peterloon Foundation=$6,000 Other Sources to be Explored Including Headstart Grant = $591,000
B. Higher Education Information Center 3 years Public Library	Cincinnati Youth Collaborative Cincinnati Foundation	$ 40,000	$100,000	$200,000		Higher Education Endowment to be set up Contributions to come from Foundations/Corporations Goal: $6,000,000
C. Last Resort Financing 3 years Taft High School	Cincinnati Foundation Taft Principal	$ 40,000	$165,000	$255,000		Higher Education Endowment to be set up (see B above)

Intervention/ Duration/ Location	Person/ Agency Responsible	Funds Required				Funding Source
		1987-88	1988-89	1889-90	1990-91	
D. Jobs 3 years Businesses	CYC	Resources to be contributed by the participating businesses				Partici-pating Businesses
E. Jobs Network 3 years	PIC	$ 30,000	$ 50,000			PIC = 80% CYC to raise 20%
F. Dropout Recovery Program 3 years	Citizens' Committee on Youth	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000		City of Cincinnati Private Industry Council
G. Leadership Development for Taft Pilot 3 years Cincinnati Public Schools	CYC/CPS/Univer-sity of Cincinnati	$ 50,000	$ 50,000	$ 50,000		CYC/Inkind from CPS & U. C.
H. Tutoring 3 years Taft High and Bloom and Porter Middle Schools	Cincinnati Public Schools/ Partners In Education	$ 2,500	$ 2,000	$ 2,000		Partners In Education
I. QUEST 3 years Taft High	CYC	$ 27,500	$ 17,200	$ 17,200		CYC
J. MIET/TESA 3 years Taft High and Bloom and Porter Middle Schools	Cincinnati Public Schools	$ 9,000	$ 8,400	$ 8,400		CYC/ Partners In Education

Intervention/ Duration/ Location	Person/ Agency Responsible	Funds Required				Funding Source
		1987-88	1988-89	1889-90	1990-91	
K. Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates--11th Grade Program 3 years Cincinnati Public Schools (Taft High)	JCG	$ 25,000	$ 25,000	$ 25,000		CYC JCG is attempting to raise additional money to to serve another 30 students
L. Mentoring 3 years Taft High and Bloom and Porter Middle Schools	CYC/Big Brothers--Big Sisters/ Partners In Education	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500		Corporate/ Collaborative Funding
M. Ed Venture (Club Ed) 3 years Taft High	CYC	$ 2,000	$ 4,000	$ 4,000		Corporate/ Collaborative Funding
N. Instructiuonal Reorganization/ Improved Guidance/ Counseling/ System	CYC/Taft High Bloom & Porter Middle Schools	$ 27,400	$ 36,700	$ 36,700		CYC: $9,000 CPS: 1987-88: $18,400 1988-89: $36,700 1989-90: $36,700
O. Instructional Regrouping	Taft High and Bloom & Porter Middle Schools	$599,100	$ 94,200	$ 94,200		CYC/CPS
P. Identification and Assessment of Cincinnati Public Schools Policies, Procedures, and School Structures	Cincinnati Public Schools	*	*	*		CPS Operating Budget

Intervention/ Duration/ Location	Person/ Agency Responsible	Funds Required				Funding Source
		1987-88	1988-89	1889-90	1990-91	
Q. Review of Modifications in the Cincinnati Public Schools Curriculum	Cincinnati Public Schools	*	*	*		CPS Operating Budget
R. Assessment of Personnel Within C.P.S. (Personnel Orientation)	Cincinnati Public Schools	*	*	*		CPS Operating Budget
S. Evaluation and Assessment of Facilities, Equipment, and Curriculum Materials	Cincinnati Public Schools	*	*	*		CPS Operating Budget
T. Improve Organization and Scheduling	Cincinnati Public Schools	*	*	*		CPS Operating Budget

*Specific budget requirements for items P-T are being developed.

VIII. THE ROLE OF THE COLLABORATIVE

Vision of the Future

All Cincinnati youth graduate from high school with the knowledge, skills desire, and opportunity to realize their full potential - whether that be to assume a productive and satisfying job or go on to higher education.

All members of the Cincinnati community -- including schools, businesses, city government and religious and service organizations -- are working together in unprecedented partnership to sustain this achievement.

As a result of the progress being achieved in helping youth reach their full potential, we are seeing sharp declines in school dropouts, youth unemployment and other problems affecting the young.

The citizens of Cincinnati take enormous pride in the progress youth are making. They know that this progress is critical because the social and economic future of our city depends upon our young people.

The Role of the Collaborative

The role of the Collaborative will be to:

1. Establish a vision and goals for the community and for all of the people who need to work together to achieve that goal. We will all achieve more together by having a common goal that we are committed to. Each of us will work harder to uphold our part of the action.

2. Facilitate, and where appropriate, oversee the development of concrete plans to meet the goals.

3. In doing this, secure alignment and cooperation of organizations and resources to provide the systems and support for our youth to achieve their full potential.

4. Provide the resources -- both financial and human -- to carry out the work to achieve this vision.

These are considered "living documents" which will continue to evolve over time as we increase our understanding of what is needed.

The Collaborative will monitor and evaluate all of the interventions that we implement. This will be done to insure effective operation and to evaluate the impact on dropout rates and student success. The evaluations will be used to improve our interventions and determine which interventions provide the most cost effective improvements and are appropriate for continued operation and/or system-wide expansion. Detailed monitoring and evaluation plans are being developed for each intervention planned but have not yet been finalized.

A comprehensive communications plan including brochures, media events and periodic "attention" events is being planned. The communications plan is designed to enroll key individuals and organizations in our vision, secure alignment and cooperation of organizations and resources and attract financial and human resources in support of our interventions. The Collaborative effort is already broadly known throughout Cincinnati because of the visible involvement of many key leaders and their active communication throughout the community.

The comprehensive communication plan will systematically carry our message to the balance of the Cincinnati community.

Accomplishments

During the first nine months of life the Collaborative has:

- Created an empowering, uplifting vision.
- Created a powerful Collaborative structure with involved people committed to achieving the vision.
- Enrolled over 200 of Cincinnati's top leaders.
- Identified key leverage points for dropout reduction and making the system work for all youth.
- Begun the process of aligning existing resources toward the vision.
- Developed a comprehensive 20-element intervention plan which deals with the total system and includes interventions ranging from pre-school for three-year-olds to promises of jobs or free college education to qualified high school graduates.

We have put in place a solid foundation upon which to:

- Increase our understanding of the problem and identify effective actions for improvement.
- Successfully execute our initial interventions.
- Enroll the Cincinnati community.
- Raise the necessary funds to implement our plans.
- Impact state and local political leaders to support necessary legislative change.

Among many other activities to be undertaken by the Collaborative next year to set direction for a long range plan for helping students at risk in Cincinnnati, the Collaborative will undertake the following specific activities:

1. Establishment of a directorate for the Collaborative. Effective January 1, 1988, the Collaborative is hiring a full time executive director to coordinate the various activities of the organization which will include:

   a. Public monitoring of the local dropout prevention plan.
   b. Enabling relevant groups to make connections with one another.
   c. Assuring that new interventions are evaluated/assessed.
   d. Exploring new opportunities and new initiatives.
   e. Providing overall support for the many aspects of dropout prevention.

2. Initiation of community involvement and education activities. In order to effectively fulfill its coordination role, it is imperative that the Collaborative undertake the following specific programs:

   a. Establish administrative offices with an executive director. Total cost of the directorate is estimated at $100,000. We are requesting $40,000 from the Ford Foundation in response to their RFP.
   b. Develop an awareness training video cassette. A video cassette and a training guide will be produced based on interviews with dropouts in Cincinnati and students who in spite of difficulties were able to complete a high school education. This cassette will be disseminated locally, regionally, and nationwide. Estimated cost is $40,000 out of which $20,000 will be requested from the Ford Foundation.
   c. Launch a communications program. Several leaflets, handouts, public service announcements, and brochures will be produced. Local media will be invited to participate in this program. Expected cost is $40,000. We will be requesting $10,000 from the Ford Foundation.
   d. Monitor community projects for students at risk. In order to maintain the direction and motivation with respect to all the interventions being initiated in Cincinnati, a comprehensive monitoring system will be developed and implemented. Estimated cost is about $30,000 out of which $15,000 will be requested from the Ford Foundation.
   e. Establish common data base among different agencies. There is a need for maintaining and exchanging a common data base by the different governmental and social organizations in the community which provide direct services to youth at risk. A system must be developed for sharing meaningful information about these services. Estimated cost is $50,000. We will request $15,000 from the Ford Foundation.

The request to the Ford Foundation will be made for the above items amounting to $100,000 in response to their RFP which is due in the Foundation's offices by the end of November, 1987.

IX. PROBLEMS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The mission of the Collaborative is noble and the task monumental. It will require a large number of committed and highly motivated individuals and organizations in the community to make a substantial difference in the lives of the children and the youth of this community. We are proud to say that we already have this kind of commitment from the members of the Collaborative. Others are joining. Given this kind of commitment, the urgency of the problem, and the capacity of the community to organize its efforts and resources effectively, we do not visualize any immediate problems in the execution of our plan.

APPENDIXES

(Available separately on request)